

Minutes from a Meeting of the Concordia Council on Student Life
Held on April 9, 2010
Loyola Campus AD-210, 10 am

PRESENT: Ms. Elizabeth Morey (Chair), Ms. Lauren Broad (Secretary), Mr. Roger Côté, Ms. Melanie Drew, Ms. Angela Ghadban, Mr. Daniel Houde, Mr. Steven Houde (on behalf of Mr. Jacques Lachance), Mr. Manu Jain, Ms. Dubravka Kapa (on behalf of Mr. Gerald Beasley), Mr. Howard Magonet, Mr. Auob Muntasar, Mr. Prince Ralph Osei, Mr. Rodney Roberts (on behalf of Ms. Katherine Hedrich), Ms. Dale Robinson, Ms. Katie Sheahan, Ms. Laura Stanbra, Ms. Brigitte St-Laurent, Ms. Lorraine Toscano, Ms. Rose Wangechi.

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Dr. Catherine Bolton, Ms. Kristen Gregor, Mr. Alexander Oster, Ms. Stephanie Siriwardhana, Mr. Mohammad Faisal Uddin.

ABSENT: Ms. Claudie Boujaklian, Ms. Johanne De Cubellis, Ms. Amanda Paquin, Mr. Adrien Severyns.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Chair called the attendees to order for an informal discussion as it awaited for quorum to be acquired. She noted that this was an informal exchange and that no formal motions would be passed without quorum.

2. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reported that the CSU and GSA elections were now officially complete. She congratulated Mr. Osei, who will be the new CSU President for the 2010-2011 academic year. Both the CSU and GSA have voted to get out of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), which will likely prove to be a long process.

The Dean of Students Office and Legal Council have been working with the Régie des alcools to clarify several issues regarding alcohol permits for the university. The Chair hoped that it would not affect the ability of groups at the university to get liquor permits over the next few weeks and she assured the Council that those involved were working diligently to resolve the issues.

The Chair announced that the We Value Loyola event took place in February, with success stemming from the involvement of the Dean of Students Office, CSU, CJLO, Multi-faith Chaplaincy, and many more. The Alternative Spring Break (ASB), introduced this year, had great success in sending Concordia students to the Dominican Republic and to local organizations in Montreal, spending their reading week volunteering in the respective communities.

The Volunteer Bureau will open within the next few months under the name of the LIVE Centre. Offices will be located on the sixth floor of the Hall building. Valerie Millette, currently a member of CUVI and working in CAPS, will fill the position of Coordinator of the centre. A pilot project will begin in the next month or so to test the new co-curricular record, with the official launch taking place in September 2010.

The CSU Speaker Series hosted Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi, who filled H-110 and gave an inspiring talk about her struggle in Iran.

The Chair said that Haiti Relief efforts continue at the university, with a book drive currently taking place. She noted that there was a surplus of non-perishable goods and clothing that were waiting at the university to be delivered to Haiti. If a method of transporting them to Haiti within the next month or so cannot be found, the items will be donated to local organizations that are helping Haitians coming to Canada.

Multi-faith Chaplaincy, in collaboration with the Dean of Students Office, hosted a Spring Festival celebration on April 7, 2010 in the Loyola Chapel. There was great entertainment and food enjoyed by many. The office plans to have another celebration in the fall to welcome new students. The Chair added that the development of the Loyola Chapel was continuing successfully and she hoped that Council members would promote the use of the space for various types of events.

The Chair reported that the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) has made \$24,000 available for new health initiatives that are focused on nutrition and exercise. She asked for members of CCSL to send their ideas for projects to Ms. Stanbra as soon as possible, since proposals would need to be ready for June 2010. This item would be added to the agenda for the April 30, 2010 CCSL meeting.

The Chair welcomed Ms. Kapa to the meeting, who was attending on behalf of Mr. Beasley.

3. REPORTS AND ITEMS OF INFORMATION

3.1 Update on HOJO

The HOJO Semi-Annual Report for 2009-2010 was distributed to members of CCSL, along with the HOJO updated budget as of February 2010.

Ms. St-Laurent noted that the budget for 2009-2010 was \$92,000, approximately \$1,500 more than the previous year, which helped cover the salaries of the Coordinator and Assistants. As of February 28, 2010, HOJO had spent about \$59,000, which was around the same as at that time the previous year, therefore the rate of spending was on track. Ms. St-Laurent added that there were five assistants to the coordinator this year, compared to three the previous year, with approximately the same number of hours being worked. This made scheduling more manageable and easier to coordinate, with more flexibility in the assistants' availability. Ms. St-Laurent called attention to the highlights of the year, notably: Loyola expansion; continued focus on quality of services; new legal handouts; more promotion; translated legal forms; new campaigns; and more workshops. Ms. St-Laurent said that Mr. Jonathan Elston, Coordinator of HOJO, will provide a full annual report at the fall 2009 CCSL meeting, when all the yearly figures will be confirmed.

3.2 CCSL Special Projects:

3.2.1 Winter 2010 report

Members of CCSL received a document including the following spreadsheets: 2009-2010 approved projects; all requests for funding for the Fall 2009 semester; and all requests for funding for the Winter 2010 semester. Ms. Stanbra noted that going into the Winter 2010 semester, there was just over \$44,000 remaining in the fund for distribution. She pointed out that after all projects were reviewed, the entire fund of \$150,000 had been distributed to 64 projects, with an overall approval rate of 67%.

Ms. Stanbra reported that there were two Major Student Initiatives that required further discussion: the CSU & GSA Legal Information Clinic and the GSA Advocacy Centre. She recalled that these two projects had been discussed at length at previous CCSL meetings, since an exception was requested to approve non-allowable expenses to be reimbursed. The projects had been approved for \$21,620 and \$8,500 respectively. Ms. Stanbra notified the Council that there have been delays in the commencement of both projects. A request has been made by the students involved to have the funds approved during this fiscal year for these projects transferred to and distributed in the 2010-2011 fiscal year. This would be another exception for these projects since the guidelines specify that expenses must be incurred and reimbursed during the same fiscal year that the project receives approval.

Mr. Osei said that after being approved for funding from the CCSL Special Projects Fund, the CSU and GSA realized that they would have to have a memorandum accepted by the unions stating that they would be providing these additional services based on the fact that they would be receiving funding from the CCSL Special Projects Fund. This has pushed back all of the anticipated starting dates for the project. Mr. Osei stated that the current plan is to start the service in the first week of May 2010, beginning before students leave for the summer break, suspend it over the summer months, then to continue the service in the fall when students return to classes.

Quorum Acquired

The Chair noted that with the arrival of Mr. Muntasar, CCSL now had quorum, therefore a motion could be formally put before the Council if necessary. Meeting is therefore officially called to order.

Mr. Jain spoke regarding the GSA Advocacy Centre. Although the GSA had anticipated beginning the centre in January 2010, several unforeseen issues had come up that prevented them from moving forward. At this time,

the issues have been resolved and the GSA were prepared to move ahead, as long as the CCSL funding could be secured and carried over into the next fiscal year. Mr. Jain expressed his hope that the Council would approve for the funding to be carried over, and said that the GSA would be very thankful if an exception would be made to ensure the success of the project.

Ms. Stanbra asked whether or not there was a guarantee from the newly elected GSA and CSU executives that this would be a priority for both groups and that they would be able to commit to seeing these projects realized based on the approved funding. Mr. Jain said that both executives are committed to the projects and that a contract would be signed between the GSA and CSU to show that they will fulfil the project based on securing the approved funding from CCSL.

Mr. Osei put forth the following motion, seconded by Mr. Muntasar:

Due to unforeseen circumstances that have prevented the projects from commencing, the CSU and the GSA will guarantee to start the CSU & GSA Legal Information Clinic and the GSA Advocacy Centre in May 2010 based on the approved funding, and they requests that the approved funding from the CCSL Special Projects Fund be rolled over to the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

The Chair opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Côté asked for clarity that the request being made in the motion was to roll over the funds to the next fiscal year, and Mr. Osei confirmed. Mr. Côté asked whether or not this was dependent on an agreement being signed between the CSU and the GSA. Mr. Osei replied that the groups wished to secure the approved funding for the next fiscal year prior to signing the agreement. The agreement would state that the services would begin in May, suspend for the summer months, and then start again in the fall of 2010. Mr. Côté asked that the motion be modified with a friendly amendment to have the funding kept aside until the CSU and the GSA could return to CCSL with an agreement that guaranteed that the projects would unfold providing the services that were described and approved in their funding applications. Mr. Côté said that he would then not have any problem deferring the funds, to be released to the CSU and the GSA when they were able to supply such evidence to the CCSL that they would provide the same service offering that had been approved this year for funding.

The motion was updated to include the friendly amendment:

Be it resolved that the funds approved by CCSL during the 2009-2010 fiscal year for the CSU & GSA Legal Information Clinic and the GSA Advocacy Centre be set aside, to be released to the CSU and the GSA after they have returned to CCSL with a report showing evidence that they are able to move forward and complete both projects as they have been approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

3.2.2 Sub-committee Special Projects Guidelines Review

The members of CCSL received a handout including the current and the proposed guidelines for the CCSL Special Projects Fund.

Ms. Stanbra told the Council that a sub-committee had met to review the CCSL Special Projects Guidelines. She pointed out that there is often much confusion among applicants concerning to two categories of projects: Student Life Project Fund and the Major Student Initiatives Fund. It was suggested that two categories remain, but that projects be separated by those requesting more versus those requesting less than \$5,000, which is reflective of the fact that most projects do not request more than this amount. Any project requesting over \$5,000 would be set aside to be reviewed by the entire CCSL committee, considering the relatively high amount requested.

Ms. Stanbra also noted that the sub-committee attempted to give more clarity to the review process, which will facilitate the decisions of the members, while providing more structure for the applicants. The proposed guidelines also offer more clarity regarding the following: eligible expenses; perceived conflict of interest; improved promotion and awareness of the fund; identification of other sources of funding; committee

composition and voting rights; criteria for reimbursement. Ms. Stanbra noted that although honoraria for speaker fees would now be an allowable expense, it would have a financial limit of \$15,000 and would have to be in accordance with university guidelines. The amount of \$15,000 was recommended, as it is equal to 10% of the total Special Projects Fund. This maximum would ensure that many worthy projects would receive needed funding.

Mr. Muntasar asked why it had been recommended that the Assistant to the Dean of Students, as secretary of the sub-committee, be made a voting member. Ms. Stanbra confirmed that it was in order to provide consistency and institutional memory to the group. This would ensure an historical perspective as to past trends in projects that have and have not received funding, while still maintaining a voting majority in the hands of the student representatives. Ms. Stanbra added that it has often been difficult to have quorum with the sub-committee, and having another voting member would also help to ensure that the projects are reviewed in a timely fashion. Mr. Muntasar inquired whether or not the \$15,000 maximum on honoraria was per project or for the entire fund for the year, and Ms. Stanbra clarified that it would be per project.

Mr. Osei requested that the document be modified to reflect that quorum shall be 4 out of 8 voting members. Mr. Côté noted that the first point of the committee membership should read “A Director of Student Services (as Chair)”. Both changes were noted.

Ms. Stanbra put forth the following motion, seconded by Mr. Magonet:

Be it resolved that the proposed guidelines presented to members of CCSL at the meeting of April 9, 2010 be implemented in the upcoming 2010-2011 academic year.

The motion passed unanimously.

3.3 CCSL Student Life Awards

The Chair said that the CCSL Awards Night had taken place on April 8, 2010 and was a great success. The addition of the CUVI Volunteer Recognition Awards last year has made the evening a more inclusive experience and the newly introduced Spirit of Giving Award was also a great addition. It was awarded this year to many at the university who contributed to the Haiti relief efforts. The Chair noted that next year members of the Board of Governors and Senate would be invited to attend. She stressed the importance for them to see the partnership between students, staff and faculty, and their commitment to improving life at the university. The Chair thanked all those who attended.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Tuition Waivers for Participation in Student Governance

Mr. Osei informed the Council that in past years, students who have participated in student governance, with the exception of those already receiving an honorarium or salary, have received a tuition waiver as an acknowledgment of their contribution and hard work. He said that this year, they were notified that the tuition waiver no longer existed. Mr. Osei reported that the CSU approached Mr. Bram Freedman, VP External Relations & Secretary General, who suggested that the issue be brought to CCSL for discussion. The Chair gave further clarification that the recommendation had been made by CCSL in 2002 to introduce the tuition waiver for participation in student governance, however it was never brought to the Board of Governors for approval. Therefore CCSL could not continue with them this academic year.

Mr. Osei put forth the following motion, seconded by Ms. Sheahan:

Be it resolved that a sub-committee be formed, consisting of the Dean of Students, one Student Services Director and two student representatives, to discuss the issue of tuition waivers for participation in student governance. The sub-committee will report back to CCSL at the April 30, 2010 meeting with their recommendations.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Sheahan wished to announce several events from Recreation & Athletics. She reported that the official ribbon cutting for the Stingers Dome took place in March 2010, with over 235 people in attendance. Ms. Sheahan was happy that all those involved in the project were able to come celebrate the event and feel appreciated for all of their hard work. Ms. Sheahan also noted that there will be space available in the Dome throughout the upcoming exam period, and she hoped that some activities could be organized in the space for students to relax during this stressful time. Ms. Sheahan asked to meet with the student representatives following the meeting to brainstorm ideas. Ms. Sheahan also wished to acknowledge that the new Dome had a tremendous impact on the Concordia men's soccer team, who had been struggling in past years to remain competitive. Thanks to added practice and bonding time made possible by the Dome, the team gained experience and self-confidence that helped them get to the gold medal game at the end of the season. Ms. Sheahan noted that the Graduating Stingers Luncheon is held every year to acquaint members of the academic and staff community with the fact that the Stinger athletes are not only strong ambassadors for the university from a sports perspective, but that they are also serious students who graduate. The luncheon emphasizes the importance to the athletes of their academic success. Ms. Sheahan reported that the Recreation & Athletics banquet would be taking place on April 10, 2010 to celebrate the achievements of the year. Ms. Sheahan brought to the attention of the Council the fences that had been erected at the Loyola campus, outlining where the new PERFORM Centre will be constructed. She added that the project must be completed by March 2011. A last point made was that the Dome would be coming down on April 30, 2010 for the summer months and will be put back up in October 2010.

Mr. Côté reported that the university will be hosting the 2010 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences from May 28-June 4, 2010, which will welcome over 9,000 delegates, primarily to the Sir George Williams campus. The conference will essentially take over the downtown campus and will have a significant impact to those attending classes at SGW, as their classes will be moved temporarily to the Loyola campus. Many at the university have been mobilized to help support the event.

5. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for April 30, 2010, 10am, SGW H-769.

6. TERMINATION OF MEETING

Ms. Stanbra motioned to terminate the meeting. Ms. Drew seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.